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Gas use still trending down, state study finds

mglover@sacbee.com

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The trend of decreased gasoline consumption statewide continued in 2009, according to the latest statistics released by the state Board of Equalization.

For all of 2009, California gas consumption fell 1.5 percent compared with the previous year. In 2008, consumption declined 4.1 percent compared with 2007.

More than 14.8 billion gallons of gas were used in California last year, down from more than 15 billion in 2008.

BOE said gas consumption declined 2.2 percent in December and 1.7 percent in the fourth quarter of 2009 compared with year-ago totals.

However, diesel use increased 3.7 percent in December – 231.7 million gallons compared with 223.4 million gallons in December 2008 – the first monthly comparison increase since February 2008.

Diesel consumption is typically considered an indicator of trucking commerce.

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Call The Bee's Mark Glover, (916) 321-1184.